

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (original): A method of preparing an aqueous extract comprising saponins on basis of waste product from a shea butter tree, said method comprising the following steps:

(i) mixing one part waste product with 4-30 parts of water;
(ii) incubating the mixture formed in step (i) under alkaline conditions ($\text{pH} > 7$); and (iii) recovering an aqueous extract comprising saponins by removing solids from the alkaline mixture formed in step (ii).

Claim 2 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the alkaline conditions are obtained by addition of an alkali in the form of a base and/or an alkaline buffer.

Claim 3 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein the alkali is selected from the group consisting of: potassium-, sodium-, calcium-, ammonium- hydroxide or potassium-, sodium-, calcium-, ammonium-, hydroxide carbonate.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-3~~, wherein the incubation in step (ii) is performed at a pH of 7-14, preferably 7-10.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-4~~, wherein the incubation step (ii) is performed at a temperature of between 15 and 95 °C at a period of between 10 minutes and 5 hours.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-5~~, wherein solids are removed from the extract in step (iii) by filtration or centrifugation.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-6~~ yielding an extract containing at least 1 weight-% dry matter.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-7~~, wherein the extract obtained in step (iii) is further concentrated and/or purified by evaporation of water and/or ultrafiltration and/or recrystallisation.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A butter tree extract obtainable by the method of claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-8~~.

Claim 10 (original): A method of producing an aqueous extract enriched with sapogenins comprising the step of subjecting a saponin containing extract of claim 9 to enzymatic or acid hydrolysis, and thereby obtaining an extract enriched with sapogenins.

Claim 11 (original): A sapogenin enriched extract obtainable by the method of claim 10.

Claim 12 (currently amended): An extract of claim 9 ~~or 11~~, wherein the active compounds are chemically modified to increase their solubility in oil.

Claim 13 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ as a food additive.

Claim 14 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a detergent product.

Claim 15 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a cosmetic product.

Claim 16 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for topical application.

Claim 17 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for lowering the level of serum cholesterol in a human being or in other mammals.

Claim 18 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for treatment of inflammatory diseases.

Claim 19 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for systemic administration.

Claim 20 (currently amended): Use of an extract of claim 9 ~~any of claims 9, 11, or 12~~ in the manufacture of a nutritional supplement.